



U.S. Department of the Interior • Bureau of Land Management • 1849 C Street N.W. • Washington, D.C. 20240

BLM Fact Sheet

Renewable Energy and the BLM

Solar

- The BLM manages 22 million acres of public lands with solar potential in 6 states – Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, and Utah.
- Between the end of Fiscal Year (FY) 07 and FY 08, the number of solar applications more than doubled, from 96 to 211.
- As of today, there are 147 solar applications pending. Of those, 104, comprising 1 million acres, are “first-in-line” applications. The remaining applications describe land previously applied for by a different company.
- In 2009, the BLM identified 14 solar fast-track projects that could be approved by the end of 2010. Eight of these projects, with a total generating capacity of 3,572 megawatts, have been approved.

Wind

- The BLM manages 20.6 million acres of public lands with wind potential in 11 western states.
- The BLM has approved 29 wind development projects with an installed capacity of 437 megawatts.
- Wind authorizations in effect, by year:
 - FY 07 – 26 development, 132 site testing
 - FY 08 – 28 development, 164 site testing
 - FY 09 – 29 development, 184 site testing
 - FY 10 – 29 development, 167 site testing
- The BLM has identified 7 wind fast-track projects that could be approved by the end of 2010. These projects have a combined potential capacity of 800 megawatts, or enough to power roughly 280,000 homes.

Geothermal

- The BLM has the delegated authority for leasing 249 million acres of public lands with geothermal potential, including over 100 million acres of National Forest lands.
- At the end of FY 09, the BLM managed 666 geothermal leases covering over 1.2 million acres.
- There are 35 geothermal power plants that use federal resources in California, Nevada, and Utah have a total net capacity of 1,300 megawatts (MW) and supply the power needs of about 1.3 million homes.
- Geothermal lease sales:
 - FY 07 – 57 parcels totaling 140,484 acres
 - FY 08 – 35 parcels totaling 105,212 acres
 - FY 09 – 156 parcels totaling 451,785 acres
 - FY 10 – 99 parcels totaling 287,063 acres
- The BLM has identified 6 geothermal fast-track projects that could be approved by the end of 2010. These projects have a combined potential capacity of 285 megawatts, or enough to power roughly 285,000 homes.

Biomass

- Biomass collected on Department of Interior lands is exclusively derived from organic matter and can be used to produce heat, electric power, transportation fuel or many other products.
- The DOI currently offers nearly 600,000 tons of woody biomass to local markets each year.
- The kinds of biomass produced from public lands include small-diameter trees and shrubs, chips, tree harvest debris, non-commercial tree species, short-rotation woody material, and grasses, as well as aquatic and terrestrial plant residues.
- Biomass provides more than 3 quadrillion British thermal units (Btu) of energy annually.
- As of 2008, biomass was the source for 53 percent of all U.S. renewable energy, or nearly 4 percent of the total energy produced in the United States.